Program: Pontificia Universidade Catolica-Rio Exchange

Maddie’s Majors: Communication Arts - Radio, TV, Film & Digital Studies Certificate

Academic Life: Speaking only Portuguese in Portuguese language classes was an extreme challenge, which I found very tough and frustrating at times. Turns out, it was an amazing experience! Learning Portuguese slang, getting comfortable speaking in front of people, and really testing my vocabulary was hugely beneficial. I don’t think I would have felt comfortable in a city like Rio if I didn’t know the language. My professor pushed us in a way that no professor has ever done before. She was warm, helpful, and inviting into the Portuguese language, and the city. She is the reason I had such a successful experience in Brazil; her classroom setting is what I think everyone should one day have.

How Study Abroad has Changed Maddie: Studying abroad pushes you to new lengths. Experiencing and living life in another country forces you to learn a lot about yourself. I think studying abroad makes you extremely patient and mature. It forces you to stay calm in high-stress situations. Studying abroad allows you to appreciate those little things that you have back in your native country. Ever since returning, I don’t get frustrated when it comes to waiting in lines or having to change plans last minute. Studying abroad has taught me how to take a step back and relax.

Tips for Students Considering Studying Abroad: If you can, jump at every opportunity! Whether it’s going to some local restaurant with locals, going to a museum, or even taking a day trip when you are just too tired - GO! You realize, once returning home, that you should go on every opportunity you can. You might not ever get to live in this country, or any new country, ever again - so seize each day and always do something different so that you go home with no regrets!

“...forces a person to be independent, mature, and adventurous.”